

# BEYOND BARRIERS

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

SIKESTON REGIONAL CENTER

SPRING 2003

## ON THE ROAD WITH SPECIAL FRIENDS



It's 6:30 a.m. at the Group Home. Nine guys and gals are dressed and ready to go. Most of the packing has been done. In one half-hour we'll be heading to Special Olympics in

Columbia.

A final check of the luggage is done, all the food is in the coolers, and everything is packed in the two vans. Seating positions have already been decided to allow best friends to be together. Everyone makes one more trip to the restroom and we head up the road. That last restroom visit might as well have been two years ago! Fifteen minutes later, all the folks pile back out of the van to visit a gas station restroom. The radio is playing either country or soft rock. Good conversation and equally good company make the miles fly.

About an hour before our scheduled lunch break, "Grandma" says, "Bathroom, now!" We take the nearest exit, but there is no gas station. By now, Grandma and a few others are chanting, "Now, now!" Finally, we see a golf course with a little building for snacks. Thirteen people pile out of the vans and approach a confused attendant who allows us to use their restrooms.

We stop at a very nice roadside park for lunch, which we enjoy under large shade trees. Some folks from another set of group homes stop by and we chat a little while with some of the athletes who are also heading to Columbia.

We arrive at the University, park the vans by the dorms, and unload quickly. Thank Heaven for elevators! Thank Heaven, too, that Mark, Cindy, and Cecil are such great team players and helpers. It isn't long until everything is organized.

Now "Grandma" is almost in tears because at 4 foot 10 inches, she can't climb into the dorm-style beds. We don't have any tools with which to lower the bed, so we tell Grandma we will get a chair for her to climb on. She tearfully says, "No, can't!", so we take the mattress down and put it under the bed. Still tearful, she says, "Alone!" Staff also takes their mattress down and join her on the floor. She is content.

We then head to the buffet supper, which is great fun. Afterwards, everyone gets cleaned up for the opening ceremonies. We find the stadium and line up in the hot May weather for almost two hours. There is a party atmosphere, with groups of athletes resplendent in their different colors. Banners and flags are everywhere. The real Olympics could not be any better. Cheers, catcalls, and laughter resound.

Friends meet and hug. Finally, well over five thousand of us march into the stadium. What pride we feel when we see ourselves and hear our name announced on the giant TV screens as we march by.

Grandma has trouble walking up and down curbs; even the smallest steps are a major problem for her. We cross the stadium floor to find our seating only to discover we have to go up **18 large concrete stairs**. I look at them from Grandma's perspective. They look like a mountain. Two thousand people are waiting behind us. With gentle reassurances, and a staff member at each elbow, Grandma heaves a sigh of relief as we reach the top. Now they want

us to go down **more steps** to be seated. Grandma has had enough. She sits on the floor at the top of the stairs, grabs the handrail and says, "No more!" Neither staff nor university helpers can convince her otherwise. Finally, one staff stays with her while the rest of our group moves on to their seating. We are kindly given folding chairs, but Grandma

scoots over against a wall. Fireworks begin the opening ceremonies. The ceremonies and entertainment are magnificent. After the ceremonies, we return to the dorms for showers and much needed rest.

By five the next morning, we're all up and anxious to get started. After breakfast, some of us head off to the track, the rest to the swimming competition. It is very hot, and I find myself becoming irritable. Then I look around at our athletes. When they are tired, they find a shady spot to rest. They push themselves to the limit in every event, and many take the gold. **They never complain, and they participate in everything with enthusiasm and joy!** I think about folks like Mark McGuire or Michael Jordan. They would have had an entourage with them, meeting their every need. I look at these folks and realize what great athletes they are. I figure, if they aren't complaining or irritable, then I certainly have no right to be, and I begin to thoroughly enjoy myself. We win many medals, and are still full of zip by the end of the day.

We enjoyed a great supper and story telling, all provided by the university. Afterwards, there is a dance, games, and shopping for souvenirs at the Olympic Town. We return to our dorms where we joke, socialize, and laugh with other athletes and their support staff. The warmth and camaraderie of all the folks we meet is pure joy.

We arrive home late the next afternoon, eager to show off many medals and souvenirs. Everyone has stories to share about our adventure in Columbia...and dreams about the next time.

-Nancy Ortega, QMRP



## Headed for Florida?



Perhaps because of the large senior population, Florida offers a phenomenal range of accessible recreation, attractions, and lodging for the traveler. You can rent a beach wheelchair and visit accessible beaches, swim with the dolphins, sit-ski on the ocean, watch a professional wheelchair basketball game, or visit your favorite theme park, just to name a few! A 424-page paperback guidebook, *Wheelchairs on the Go, Accessible Fun in Florida* is available for about \$25. It is chock full of resources and ideas. Call 1-888-245-7300 to order, or visit [www.wheelchairsonthego.com](http://www.wheelchairsonthego.com) for ordering or other information. Some Florida resources are listed below:

**Island Dolphin Care:** 1-305-451-5884 or

[www.islanddolphinscare.org/](http://www.islanddolphinscare.org/)

**Billy's Rentals:** 1-941-472-5248

**SportsAbility Days:** 1-850-668-7323

**Universal Studios:** [www.universalstudiosorlando.com/](http://www.universalstudiosorlando.com/)



## Eye Can See Clearly Now...

### Vision Concerns for Older Persons who have a Developmental Disability

Growing older for people who have a developmental disability means facing vision problems similar to those of the rest of the aging population. Among them are the possibility of declining sight caused by age-related vision disorders, such as cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. Difficult to cope with under any circumstances, for the person with mental retardation or a developmental delay, vision loss is even more likely to make the difference between ability to maintain some functional independence and total dependence.

Problems with learning, orientation, attention span, and communication create special difficulties and require special attention. Individuals may be particularly dependent on visual cues. Vision, under these circumstances, takes on special importance.

Poor vision among the developmentally disabled population may result from: 1) medication that can affect the eyes, 2) failure by the person or his/her caretaker to recognize that there is a vision loss, 3) lack of ability of consumer to communicate clearly that there is a vision problem; 4) difficulty of conducting an eye examination and making an accurate assessment; 5) failure to refer for eye care and follow through in getting glasses. If vision loss is suspected, then it is essential to determine the cause and the type of loss.

Lighthouse International ([www.lighthouse.org](http://www.lighthouse.org)) provides tips for caretakers regarding how to identify persons with vision disorders, referrals, treatment, and simple environmental modifications that will enable the person to function with maximum independence. Call Candy at Sikeston Regional Center (573-472-5300) for a copy of the Lighthouse website information or visit [http://www.lighthouse.org/resources\\_developmental.htm](http://www.lighthouse.org/resources_developmental.htm)

**Financial Aid for Eye Care** Find out who to contact if you cannot afford eye examinations, eyeglasses or surgery at [http://www.lighthouse.org/resources\\_financial.htm](http://www.lighthouse.org/resources_financial.htm).



### FREE Vision Assessments.





Leet Eye Care, 2909 Independence, Cape Girardeau, Mo. Offers free vision assessments for three-year-old children on a quarterly basis. The next date for the free assessment is June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2003. Call 573-334-2020 to schedule an appointment for your three-year-old with Dr. Laura Evans.

## Vision USA



More than 40 million low-income working people in the United States cannot afford the cost of routine eye care or the health insurance that covers it. Now a year-round program, VISION USA, can help people who are uninsured, low-income, or have no other means of obtaining eye care, by providing basic eye health and vision care services free of charge. VISION USA is a program developed by doctors of optometry who are members of the American Optometric Association.

**Eligibility:** The program is open to children and adults of all ages who qualify. To receive free services, individuals must:

-  Have a job or live in a household where there is one working member.
-  Have no vision insurance.
-  Have income below an established level based on household size.
-  Have not had an eye exam within two years.

The above requirements may vary by state. If an individual or family is eligible, they will be matched with a volunteer doctor of optometry who will provide eye exams at no charge and eyewear at no cost or a small fee/donation.

**How to get care:** Call 1-800-766-4466 M-F 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; or write VISION USA, 243 N. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63141 --from *Independently Speaking!* Published by Semo Alliance for Disability Independence (SADI)



# TIPS FOR TRAVELERS

## **Right in Your Own Backyard:**

Find loads of ideas for places to go and things to do, right here in Missouri...just check out <http://www.missouritourism.org>. The website will even help you plan your trip! You can order a free travel kit or getaway guide online, or call toll free: **1 (800) 810-5500**. To find out about accessibility in Missouri State parks and historical sites, visit this site: <http://www.mostateparks.com/access.htm>.

## **Sports and Outdoor Resources for People with Disabilities:**

**Calling all Fishermen (and women)!** HandiCAPABLE Guide Service, Inc., is a nonprofit guide service that provides “individuals in Kentucky and surrounding states the opportunity to experience the thrills and challenges of boating, fishing, hunting, and other forms of outdoor recreation.”

- Entirely volunteer staff
- 21 wheelchair-accessible Southern Skimmer fishing boats with wheelchair tie downs
- Adaptive fishing equipment available for use during the visit
- Volunteers are trained and experienced in adaptive fishing/hunting techniques
- All fees go directly back into the program

Their website is [www.handicapable.net](http://www.handicapable.net). The phone number is (270) 362-4928



**GORP:** This guide to outdoor recreation has a section on accessible destinations for people who use wheelchairs. <http://gorp.com/gorp/eclectic/disabled.htm>

**PCBA:** The Physically Challenged Bow Hunters of America insists that bow hunting is the best therapy in the world! <http://www.pcba-inc.org/>

## **Sports Gear and More!**

For a person with physical disabilities, having the correct equipment can mean the difference between dreaming and participating. **Access to Recreation** is a catalog of adaptive recreation equipment featuring unique items, like aids for fishing, hunting, bowling, golf, exercising, swimming, etc. Also wheelchairs, standers, travel lifts and fold-up travel electric scooter, portable ramps, as well as hand-cycles, adapted trykes...etc. Order a catalog at 1-800-634-4351 or visit the website [www.accesstr.com](http://www.accesstr.com).



## **Camps**

A **2003 Camps List** contains websites and contact information for summer and year-round camp sessions in Missouri and nearby regions, as well as a list of websites for doing your own online camp search. To obtain a free copy, call Candy Lane at 573-472-5300.

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**Assisted Travel:** Visit Guided Tour, Inc. for a list of vacation destinations for people who want or require assistance and support [www.guidedtour.com](http://www.guidedtour.com), or call toll free 1-800-783-5481 for a brochure and list of vacations.

**Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality (SATH):** [www.sath.org](http://www.sath.org) Click on “Travel Tips and Access Information” to find a goldmine of tips and travel information for persons with all types of disabilities. Check it out before you plan your next vacation!

**Access-Able Travel Source:** [www.access-able.com](http://www.access-able.com) If you’ve vowed not to “stay on the porch” this year, check out the opportunities on this website! Search for information by World Cities, Cruises, Travel Agents, Travel Tips...or read Travel Tales shared by people from around the world.

**Scoot Around North America:** This organization will arrange to meet mobility needs with scooters/wheelchairs that can be rented within major cities in the USA. With one phone call, you can arrange to have a scooter or wheelchair delivered whenever and wherever you need it. 1-888-441-7575.

**Accessible Van Rentals:** Rent, or even buy, accessible vans!

**Wheelchair Getaways** - Rent wheelchair or scooter accessible vans, available in over 40 locations nationwide. Visit <http://www.wheelchair-getaways.com/> or call 1-800-642-2042 for details.

**Accessible Vans of America** – Nationwide provider of accessible vehicles for people with disabilities. Visit <http://www.accessiblevans.com/> or call 1-888-282-8267.

**Wheelerz Accessible Van Rentals** - Nationwide locations. Call toll free 1-800-456-1371 or visit <http://www.wheelerz.com/>.

## PARENT TO PARENT

Now that spring has arrived and the last semester of school is coming to an end, you begin to hear chatter from family and friends planning their summer vacations. There are many decisions to make - where to go on vacation, when to go on vacation, and how long the vacation will last. Of course, if you're like my family, you may not ever have had the opportunity to plan a big vacation. We have had vacations, an out of town family wedding, friend's barbeque, or weekend at the lake - just nothing big like a week in Disney or a week at the beach. To be honest, I would say I have enjoyed every little vacation and small getaway I have ever taken. Some of the best vacations are the unplanned vacations.

One of the funniest times I had on a summer vacation was in my own backyard, sleeping on my deck. Our family wanted to go camping. We didn't even own a tent. I am not that gung-ho about sleeping outside in the heat, not to mention the hard stiff ground. So we compromised, and we slept on our deck with lots of pillows and our very own box fan blowing right on us all night!!! When we woke up the next morning, we were all wet from the early morning dew. The neighbors probably wondered what we were doing - but we had fun!! We had all the comforts of home right at our fingertips at our private vacation campout. Enjoy this summer, and remember - vacation is just a fancy word for FUN! It's important to get away once in awhile. It's renewing and rewarding, not just for parents, but for the children also. Dust off those fans and start planning your next FUN camp-out.

- Cindy Brotherton, Parent Policy Partner



## Dial 711 Telephone Service

The 3-digit telephone number 711 is available free, nationwide, for the benefit of hearing and speech impaired telephone users. By dialing 711, both voice and TRS users are now able to initiate a call from any telephone, anywhere in the United States, without having to remember and dial a seven or ten-digit access number. TRS facilitates telephone conversations between people who do have hearing or speech disabilities and those who do not. For example, in one type of TRS, a text telephone (TTY) user calls a voice telephone user through this relay center. A communications assistant places the call to the voice user, then transcribes spoken content for the TTY user, and reads text aloud for the voice user.

Under FCC rules, 711 TRS dialing must be provided by all telecommunications carriers in the United States, including wire-line, wireless, and payphone providers. If consumers find that they are unable to get 711 TRS access, they should contact the FCC's Consumer Center at 1-888-CALL-FCC (voice) or 1-888-Tell-FCC (TTY), or by email at [access@fcc.gov](mailto:access@fcc.gov). For more information, visit [www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trs.html](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trs.html).

### Thought of the Day

*"In the world there is nothing more submissive and weak than water. Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong nothing can surpass it."*

-- Lao Tzu



## FREEBIES

**FREE Audio Parenting Tape** for parents who are having discipline problems with their children. Through this tape, Dr. James Jones offers principles of parenting using common sense and communication techniques. To order the tape, call toll free 1-800-900-3344. For more information, check out the Familyhood Foundation at [www.familyhood.com](http://www.familyhood.com).

**Free MSN TV with one year of free Internet for kids with disabilities:** **BRAVE KIDS** donates MSN TVs to children with a chronic, life-threatening illness or a disability, because *Brave Kids* wants all children to have equal opportunity to maintain their education through the use of internet resources. MSN TV is an interactive device and wireless keyboard that connects to a standard at-home television. It allows kids to send e-mail to friends and family, surf the Internet, stay in touch with teachers and school, and access the *Brave Kids* website. All that is required is a phone line and a television. One year of *free Internet* service is provided with each MSN TV through *Brave Kids*. All MSN TV donations must be set up through a healthcare worker (i.e., regional center service coordinator, physical or occupational therapist, doctor, etc.) The parent/guardian and the healthcare worker must each fill out a release form, which must be mailed by the healthcare worker. Forms and additional information can be found on the [www.bravekids.org](http://www.bravekids.org) website (click on Community Services), or obtained by faxing (310) 395-5402.

**Computers for People with Disabilities:** The **Jim Mullen Foundation** project provides **free** computers for people with disabilities or special needs. The computers are donated by corporations and upgraded. There is a charge of \$125.00 for shipping, if necessary (the foundation is located near Chicago), and an optional donation of \$25.00. The waiting list is currently about one year; however, that could change! A verification of disability must be filled out by the person's doctor. Download and print the application packet from their website at [www.jimmullen.com](http://www.jimmullen.com), or call (312) 440-4251 to have one mailed to you.







## Insurance Problems?

The Missouri Department of Insurance (MDI) regulates the insurance industry in Missouri and provides consumer protection for the insurance-buying public. Don't understand your insurance policy? Do you think you have been treated unfairly by your insurance company, agent, broker or agency? Are you having problems with disability payments from your insurance company? Then MDI is who you need to call! MDI has information on auto, home, workers compensation and general insurance. You can visit the MDI website at [www.insurance.state.mo.us](http://www.insurance.state.mo.us) or call them at 1-800-726-7390.

**SNAP:** Parents who have private medical insurance can also contact SNAP, a not-for-profit organization that will help families understand their policy and problem-solve their insurance nightmares, hopefully with a minimum of stress on the family. Visit their website at [www.snapinfo.org](http://www.snapinfo.org), or call the free hotline at 1-888-310-9889.

**CLAIM:** This grant-funded organization provides free counseling to all Medicare beneficiaries in Missouri. Over 250 CLAIM volunteers statewide will help you sort out your insurance and Medicare nightmares and provide Medicare and insurance counseling...free of charge. Call CLAIM toll free: 1-800-390-3330.

## Assistance for Medical Travel



The availability of charitable, long-distance medical air transportation in the U.S. is growing rapidly. More than 41,500 patients and their escorts were served during calendar year 2002.

The **NATIONAL PATIENT TRAVEL HELPLINE** provides information about all forms of charitable, long-distance medical air transportation and provides referrals to all appropriate sources of help available in the national charitable medical air transportation network.

To be assisted with free medical air transportation, you will be asked to state or verify the following:

1. A medical necessity verification. Normally, your home doctor will be asked to complete a faxed form stating the medical necessity for your travel, where you are going for your treatment and the condition being treated. Your physician will then be asked to verify that it is medically safe for you to travel in the type of aircraft to be used for your transportation.
2. A "financial-means" evaluation. In one form or another, the charity that provides you service will ask questions and seek certification from you or your clergy, social worker or physician - that you having to pay for commercial air transportation for the required travel would be a financial hardship.

To take advantage of this service, or more information, call the National Patient Travel HELPLINE at 800-296-1217 or visit <http://www.patienttravel.org/>



## HOUSE CALLS USA

HouseCalls USA responds to requests for physicians who make house calls. Services are available throughout the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. Physicians travel to your hotel room, residence or workplace to deliver medical care. Licensed, insured physicians are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and handle all types of cases, from sore throats and flu to minor lacerations. Many medications can be dispensed at the time of the visit, so patients don't have to search for an open pharmacy. Services are covered by most insurance plans. House call visits begin at \$150 depending upon time of day and location. For more information, visit [www.hoteldocs.com/main.asp](http://www.hoteldocs.com/main.asp) Request a physician through the website from 7am to 8 pm EST Monday through Friday. During all other hours requests should be made by calling the toll free number 1-877-244-7362.



# Your Child and Medication

**The Doctor Visit:** Make sure the doctor knows all of your child's medical issues. Before you leave the house, list every medication your child is taking, including over-the-counter medicines or vitamin and herbal supplements. Tell the doctor about any allergic reactions your child has suffered.

**Questions you should ask the doctor** if medication is prescribed for your child:

- What is the name of the medication and how will it help my child? Is there a generic version and is it ok to use it?
- What is the proper dosage for my child?
- How often must it be given? With meals or on an empty stomach?
- How long should my child stay on this medication and dosage?
- If your child has a problem with pills or capsules, is it available in other forms?
- Are there any foods, other medications or activities my child should avoid while on this medication?
- Are there possible side effects?
- What if my child misses a dose or spits it up?

**When you have the prescription filled**

- Be sure the pharmacist gives you a flyer describing the medication, how to take it and any possible side effects. Read it.
- **Read the label carefully before giving the medication to your child.** It will give you the name of the pharmacy, its telephone number, the name of the medication, the dosage and when it should be taken. It will also tell you how many times the medication can be refilled.
- **Never** decide to increase or decrease the dosage or stop the medication without consulting the doctor.
- **Don't** give medication prescribed for one child to another child, even if it appears to be the same problem.
- Keep a chart and mark it each time the child takes the medication. It is easy to forget.

## Online Health Information

The websites listed below, two of which are maintained by U.S. Government entities, contain virtual cornucopias of medical, health and prescription drug information. They are easy to navigate and contain reliable information on almost any medical topic. Best of all, they are written in language that is easy to understand!

**Medline Plus:** [www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)

**Health Square:** [www.healthsquare.com](http://www.healthsquare.com)

**Health Finder:** <http://www.healthfinder.gov/>

**Needy Meds:** [www.needy meds.com](http://www.needy meds.com) For people who have no insurance and can't afford to purchase their medicines, Needy Meds is the place to learn about patient assistance programs available for individual medications. This is an information source, not a program. Visit the website, click on "Drug List," then find and click on any medication. It will explain any patient assistance programs for that medication, along with eligibility requirements.



# TECH TIME

(Web resources you won't want to miss!)

**Special Child** is a website devoted to parents and caregivers of children with special needs. Be sure to check out the Tips page! <http://www.specialchild.com>

**Parent Soup** includes information for parents on almost any parenting issue. There is also a Mom-to-Mom chat room. Learn the latest in potty training and discipline, or how to get your child to listen. Visit <http://www.parentsoup.com> and see for yourself!

**FindLaw for the Public:** This site helps consumers with legal questions. Information is organized into areas of the law that people commonly encounter. It also includes a directory of attorneys in the U.S. <http://public.findlaw.com/>

**Switchboard:** Tired of being billed for calling Information to get phone numbers? This site works for residential and business numbers: [www.switchboard.com](http://www.switchboard.com)

**Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf** RIF, a national certifying organization for interpreters, offers information for people who are deaf or hearing impaired at [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)

**Reference Desk:** Find almost anything on this website!! [www.refdesk.com](http://www.refdesk.com)

**Sensory Integration Challenge:** [www.si-challenge.org](http://www.si-challenge.org)

**Cure Autism Now** is dedicated to finding effective biological treatments, prevention, and a cure for autism and related disorders. Check out new studies and research at [www.cureautismnow.org](http://www.cureautismnow.org)

## Especially for Kids!

More than a web site, **The Space Place** is a NASA-sponsored nation-wide space and space science education initiative. The program engages elementary school age kids to actively participate in space science activities. Its message? Science and technology and learning about space are fun! Kid-friendly! <http://spaceplace.jpl.nasa.gov/index.shtml>

At **World Kids**, kids can hang out and have fun. Great kid site with no advertising! [www.worldkids.net](http://www.worldkids.net)

Presented by the Screen Actors Guild Foundation, **Storyline Online** features Guild members reading children's books aloud. Each book on the site also offers a lesson plan and an activity guide. [www.bookpals.net](http://www.bookpals.net) (click on "storyline")

**Super Surf** takes children on adventures around the world. [www.supersurf.com](http://www.supersurf.com)

## Did You Know??

- The leading cause of disability and/or death in children is traumatic brain injuries (TBI).
- Most accidents that result in TBI are preventable

If you want to explain the importance of safety to your child (why they should wear a bicycle helmet, for example), but feel like they just don't listen, try some of these websites. They provide activities and games that are fun, but also express the importance of safety and the prevention of head injuries.

[www.radrider.com](http://www.radrider.com)  
<http://myfloridalegal.com/kids/kids.html>  
[www.nhtsa.dot.gov/kids/biketour/index.html](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/kids/biketour/index.html)  
[www.kotb.com/kob2.htm/mayfeature.html](http://www.kotb.com/kob2.htm/mayfeature.html)



*"I can assure you there is no more powerful advocate for children than a parent armed with information and options."*

-- Secretary Rod Paige





## NEWS YOU CAN USE

--Candy Lane, Community Resource Coordinator

### Free Wheelchair Clinics

Want to learn more about routine wheelchair maintenance and adjustments? Would you like to have your wheelchair checked out for safety? Need some minor repairs on your wheelchair? **You are in luck!!!** Kenny Rogers Children's Center, Sikeston Regional Center, and Region IX Council on Developmental Disabilities are collaborating to co-host two Wheelchair Clinics in Cape Girardeau! The clinics are open to anyone who uses a wheelchair, or provides care or assistance for someone with a wheelchair. Each clinic will begin with a demonstration session, followed by hands-on practice, and finally individual instruction on your personal wheelchair (so be sure to bring it with you!) Clinics will be held at Horizon Enrichment Center (back entrance to the old Notre Dame High School), 1912 Ritter, Cape Girardeau.

Please pre-register if you plan to attend either one

Saturday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

(If you have a piece of adaptive equipment (i.e. wheelchair, stander, gait trainer, etc.) that is in good condition, but that you can no longer use, would you consider donating it to someone who needs it? If so, please drop it off during either of the above clinics. We thank you!)

For more information or to pre-register, call Tom Berkbigler at 573-472-0397 or Candy Lane at 573-472-5300.

Learn how to adapt battery operated toys to switches at  
[www.ataccess.org](http://www.ataccess.org) (click on "We Can Play.")

## Car and Driver Talk



"Adapting Motor Vehicles for People with Disabilities:" is a free brochure available online. The information in this brochure is based on the experiences of driver rehabilitation specialists and other professionals who work with individuals who require adaptive devices for their motor vehicles. Go to <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/adaptive/brochure/brochure.html>

Infinite Potential Through Assistive Technology: For more adaptive driving information, visit this web site: <http://www.infinitec.org/live/driving/drivingintro.htm>

Many major automotive manufacturers offer rebates to consumers who wish to add adaptive equipment to the vehicles they've purchased or leased. Although each company's program is slightly different, most aftermarket equipment and modifications are covered by these rebates. Check with the manufacturer first to see what equipment will be covered and how to apply for reimbursement.

**Saturn Mobility:** 1-800-553-6000 or (TTY) (800) 833-6000

**GM Mobility Assistance Center:** 1-800-323-9935 or (TTY) (800) 833-9935

**Chrysler Corporation AutoMobility:** 1-800-255-9877 or (TTY) (800) 922-3826

**Ford Mobility Motoring Program:** 1-800-952-2248 or (TTY) (800) 833-0312

**Volkswagen Mobility Access Program:** 1-800-374-8389

**Toyota Mobility Assistance Program:** 1-800-331-4331

**Lexus Mobility Assistance Program:** 1-800-255-3987

- from *Independently Speaking*, a publication of SADI

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever has!"*  
- - Margaret Meade





## Is Your Child Safe???

Motor vehicle crashes remain the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 14 and under. Child safety seats and safety belts, when installed and used correctly, can prevent injuries and save lives. Unrestrained children are more likely to be injured, suffer severe injuries, and die in motor vehicle crashes than children who are restrained.

- In 1999, 1684 child occupants ages 14 and under died in motor vehicle crashes.
- In 2000, an estimated 248,000 children ages 14 and under were injured as occupants in motor vehicle related crashes.
- In addition to physical trauma, motor vehicle injuries can have long-lasting psychological effects. One study showed that 25% of children who suffered from traffic injuries, and 15 percent of their parents were later diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.
- As of October 1, 2001, 118 children had been killed by passenger air bags. Twenty of these deaths were among infants in rear-facing child safety seats in front of a passenger air bag. More than 84% of all children killed by passenger air bags were either unrestrained or improperly restrained at the time of the crash.

### **When and Where Motor Vehicle Occupant Deaths and Injuries Occur:**

- 75% of motor vehicle crashes occur within 25 miles of home. In addition, 60% of crashes occur on roads with posted speed limits of 40 mph or less.
- Rural areas have higher motor vehicle crash incident rates and death rates than urban areas. In addition, crashes in rural areas tend to be more severe.

### **Prevention Tips:**

- All children ages 12 and under should be properly restrained in the back seat on every ride.
- Infants should ride in a rear-facing safety seat as long as possible, until they are at least 12 months old and weight at least 20 lbs. Children who are at least 1 year old, weigh 20-40 pounds, and can no longer ride rear-facing should ride in forward-facing child safety seats.
- Children over 30 pounds should be correctly secured in belt-positioning boosters or other appropriate child restraints until the adult lap and shoulder belts fit correctly (around age 8). Once the vehicle safety belts fit children, both lap and shoulder belts should be correctly used.
- Any safety seat must be installed and used according to manufacturer's instructions and vehicle owner's manual. Call the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Auto Safety Hotline, (888)327-4236, to inquire about any recalls or safety notices on child safety seats.

### **Did You Know:**

- 80% of child safety seats are used incorrectly. Vehicle and child safety seat incompatibilities can make installation of a child safety seat difficult. The Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) system is designed to make installation of child safety seats easier by requiring child safety seats to be installed without using the vehicle's seat belt system. Since September 2002, all new vehicles have standard hardware installed in the vehicle seats and all child safety seats have two lower attachments to attach to the vehicle anchorages.
- In a vehicle crash at 30 mph, an unbelted child would hit the dashboard with as much force as a fall from a three-story building.
- The safety belt fits a child correctly when:
  - a) The child can sit all the way back against the vehicle seat, with his/her knees bent over the edge.
  - b) The lap belt remains snugly positioned over the hips and upper thighs.
  - c) The shoulder belt remains snugly positioned across the chest and collarbone. Don't let kids put shoulder belts under their arms or behind their backs. Kids who misuse belts this way are not protected in a crash.

Cape Girardeau Area SAFE KIDS Coalition is a local, non-profit community effort sponsored by Southeast Missouri Hospital. The goal of the Cape Girardeau Area SAFE KIDS Coalition is to reduce childhood injuries and deaths through Public Awareness, Education, and Community Action.

The good news is that most childhood injuries and fatalities can be prevented. SAFE KIDS works to organize and present child passenger safety checkpoints, BikeSmart, water and fire safety events. Other programs include those that highlight safety equipment and hands-on education of parents and children for bike, motor vehicle, fire, home, and water safety.

Call SAFE KIDS today and reserve a time for your car seat to be inspected!! SAFE KIDS Coalition, 1701 Lacey St. Cape Girardeau, MO 63701; 573-651-5815.

For information about the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, visit their website at [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).

-- From SAFE KIDS Brochure

## Regional Round-Up



### **Youth Catch and Release Fishing Clinic**

Parents can bring children, along with fishing poles and bait, to Capaha Park Pond in Cape Girardeau for a fun-filled day of fishing. Prizes will be awarded and lunch provided. The day begins at 8:30 a.m. on May 17, 2003. For more information, call Amy at 334-2859.

### **S.T.A.R. May Play Day**

Join the fun May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003, from 6-8 p.m. at Arena Park in Cape Girardeau...horseshoes, games, contests. For more information or to register, contact the Osage Community Centre by May 7<sup>th</sup> at 573-334-2859. S.T.A.R. is a community therapeutic recreation program serving individuals, from school-age to adult, who have varying degrees and types of developmental disabilities, and who are unable to successfully participate in regular recreation programs.

## Questions to Ask Yourself Regarding Your Child's 2003-2004 IEP Under the IDEA

- ✓ Did you receive your procedural safeguards prior to the IEP meeting as required by law? Did they include the many changes required by the 1997 Amendments?
- ✓ Did you receive prior written notice as required by law? This is the notice that explains to you in writing anything you wanted that the school refused to do.
- ✓ Did the school consider Extended School Year for your child? If not, why not, and did they put it in writing—that is the prior written notice you are entitled to.
- ✓ Is your child's 2003-2004 IEP in accordance with the 1997 Amendments? Do you have quarterly objectives that will be reported to you in writing?
- ✓ Were all the required personnel at the IEP meeting for your child, as required by the '97 Amendments?
- ✓ If your child has a behavior that impedes his/her learning or that of others, did the school do a positive behavior plan as part of the IEP?
- ✓ How was assistive technology handled at your IEP meeting? It must be considered for your child.



This information is educational and not intended to be legal advice.

Reed Martin is an attorney with over 34 years experience in special education law and recognized as one of the nation's leading experts. He can be reached through email at [connie@reedmartin.com](mailto:connie@reedmartin.com) or <http://www.reedmartin.com>

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Visit Sikeston Regional Center's Website at: <http://www.modmh.state.mo.us/sikeston/index.htm>

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**Information on alternative treatments, resources, and products is provided in this newsletter as a service to families, and does not reflect the endorsement of the Sikeston Regional Center or the Missouri Department of Mental Health. Families should always consult with their doctors and therapists before trying any new product or treatment.**

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Beyond Barriers committee: Cindy Brotherton, Lee Trankler, Candy Lane, Royce Kessel

Beyond Barriers editor: Pam Webb

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**Sikeston Regional Center  
Beyond Barriers Team  
112 Plaza Drive  
PO Box 966  
Sikeston, MO 63801**